THE SENTINEL
OFFICIAL SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

Why Are We Damaging Our Aircraft?

So far this year we have become quite adept in the art of damaging our aircraft while still on the ground. We have hit other aircraft when our wings overlapped the other aircraft by 10 feet, damaged aircraft tails by not having the bi-fold door completely open, taken out wing tip lights and wing tips through the fine art of hitting hangar doors, pushed aircraft into the hangar without removing our car first, and damaged rudders, elevators and horizontal stabilizers by pushing them into T-hangar corners. Three times we have, unsuccessfully, tried to taxi between parked aircraft. We have even hit a fence while parking and run into a building while trying to avoid a set of chocks on the ground. This damage has not been isolated to CAP. We have had two FBOs tow another aircraft into ours and had a Citation jet hit the nose cowling of our parked aircraft. Thank goodness the engine wasn't running on our aircraft.

Somewhere I read something about being in close proximity to other objects. I believe I read it in CAPR 60-1 para 2-18b(1). It goes something like this: "*Pilots will maintain adequate clearance from all obstacles during all ground operations. When taxiing within 10 feet of any obstacle, pilots shall bring the aircraft to a complete halt, and then proceed at a pace not to exceed a slow walk until clear of the obstacle*." I might add that if you are the least doubtful of your clearance get a wing walker. If you are alone, shut down, go and take a look, and use the tow-bar that comes with every aircraft in the CAP inventory. Why risk damaging the aircraft? Wings stick out 20 feet from where you are sitting and it is definitely not "cool" to walk into an FBO and announce, "I just ran into another airplane."

All I am asking for is a little old fashioned Common Sense. There is no reason for all this ground damage to our aircraft. Everyone; please perform a more thorough preflight and post flight. If you find damage to the aircraft, report it immediately using the on-line Form 78. If you find damage on a preflight, report it immediately because the pilot flying last might say "it was OK when I tied it down" and you may get blamed. The same goes for the post flight. If you damage the aircraft, own up to it and let's get it repaired right away.

Again I ask, for Common Sense when working with aircraft. Flying has inherent hazards and the entire crew should be aware of these hazards. In CAP, we are a team. So if you see a hazard, speak up. No one else may be aware of what you saw. Remember, the life you save may be your own.

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That Safety Culture

Three Safety Building Blocks
"Involved with Texas Wing Safety Program"

The long and fun-filled days of summer are here! As you prepare to take advantage of the warmer weather and longer daylight hours, you have a responsibility to ensure they are enjoyed safely; that you act as a "Good Wingman."

Since I've been involved with the Texas Wing Safety Program, I've seen the results of poor decisions, and three areas come to mind as constants to prevent tragic accidents and personal loss. The three areas, which are the building blocks of a successful safety culture, are: *leadership, wingmanship, and personal responsibility.*

- Active Leadership - Supervision at every level needs to actively support safety, not only in words but with their actions. Every member looks for successful role models...what kind of an example do you set? Are you proactive and engaged in your mishap prevention programs? Those you lead are following what they see you do. Lead safely.

- Wingmanship - Many of us enjoy participating in high-risk activities and do so safely. We also know of those who go beyond the safe level during activities. They press and exceed the limits of smart high-risk activities. Safety programs and leadership may not be out there when that poor choice is made, but maybe a good Wingman will be. The toughest choice will be the decision to intervene. This is where a true Wingman steps up. A good Wingman recognizes the limits and is willing to step in and "break the chain" before it turns into a mishap. It is better to intervene than to reflect on what you could have, or should have, done to prevent it. Keep in mind your training and the ORM program that we have put in place for your guide.

- Personal Responsibility - When all else fails, personal responsibility will keep you safe. That means doing the right (and safe) thing always, whether on a mission, at home, or at work. A safety attitude must go with you everywhere and in everything you do. How do you explain a senseless and avoidable accident? Accepting personal responsibility for what you do is vital to avoiding that accident.

Leadership, Wingmanship, and Personal Responsibility are three keys to providing a safe and enjoyable summer. Use them to ensure a successful 101 Critical Days of Summer.

Lt Col George E. Grondin, CAP
TXWG Dir of Admin and Personnel

Summary of Form 78 Accidents and Incidents Received for April 2008

Aircraft

Aircraft struck runway light on crosswind landing.

Aircraft tail tiedown ring struck runway on landing.

Aircraft flared and landed left of runway; damage to right main gear fairing.

Aircraft damaged during severe weather.

Bodily Injury

SM slipped on wet grass and broke small bones in leg.

Cadet broke right middle finger while playing a "capture the flag" game.

Cadet injured wrist in a fall during volleyball game.

Motorcycle Safety

I looked at the greater number of motorcycles on the road lately with mixed feelings. I have been a motorcycle rider myself, on and off, for the past 30 years. But then I wondered, why the steady increase in the number of bikes on the road? Probably the ever rising gas prices we are now incurring.

The second part of my mixed feeling knows that with more motorcycles on the road, the greater the chance of an increase in accidents with serious or fatal injuries occurring. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), on a per vehicle mile basis, a person traveling by motorcycle is almost 16 times more likely to be involved in a fatal crash and approximately 4 times more likely to be injured in a crash than an automobile passenger.

To help educate riders some states created Motorcycle Safety Education Programs; a not-for-profit organization promoting the safety of motorcyclists with programs in rider training, operator licensing and public information.

One of the things that make motorcycling enjoyable is the freedom of riding in the open air. Unlike car drivers, surrounded by a steel compartment, motorcycle riders feel as if they are a part of everything around them. Of course, sometimes being out there can have its drawbacks, like when you ride in extremely hot or cold weather, when it's raining, when insects are pelting you, or when debris flies up at you. It's for these type situations, and possible encounters between you and the asphalt, that protective gear was developed. Keep in mind it's only useful if you wear it. The only thing between you and the road is your protective gear.

Traffic crash records indicate that the proper training of motorcyclists plays a key role in the avoidance of crashes and the minimization of injuries and fatalities resulting from crashes. New rider programs of this type are a great start to help make the riders safer. For us with a few years under our belts (ok, us older riders) here are a few key things we all can do: (1) get additional training, such as taking refresher rider courses, (2) wear protective gear at all times, including a DOT approved helmet, (3) ride unimpaired by alcohol or other drugs, (4) ride within your own skill limits and (5) rest before you ride.

Be visible: (1) Remember that cars often have trouble seeing motorcycles and reacting in time. (2) Make sure your headlight works and is on day and night. (3) Use reflective strips or decals on your clothing and on your motorcycle. (4) Be aware of blind spots cars and trucks have. (5) Flash your brake light when slowing down and before stopping. (6) If a car's driver doesn't see you, don't be afraid to use your horn. (7) Wear long sleeves and long pants, over-the-ankle boots and gloves.

Whether you're new to riding or a seasoned veteran, give yourself space and time to respond to other motorists' actions and give them time and space to respond to you. Constantly search the road for changing conditions. Ride in the part of a lane where you are most visible (closest to the center line for motorcycles and center of the lane for trikes) and be sure to watch for turning vehicles. Ride extra defensively.

Enjoy the many advantages riding a motorcycle provides. It's great, but just be safe.

REX R. MEYER, Lt Col., CAP
Asst National Safety Officer

Carbon Monoxide Awareness

Carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning is the most common industrial poisoning accident in the United States. When carbon monoxide poisoning occurs, it can have significant and fatal consequences for aircraft occupants.

CO is found in varying amounts in the smoke and fumes resulting from burning engine fuels and lubricants. The gas itself is colorless, odorless and tasteless but is usually mixed with other gases and fumes that can be detected by sight or smell. When CO is taken into the lungs, it combines with hemoglobin, the oxygen carrying agent in blood. The affinity of the hemoglobin for CO is so much greater than for oxygen (240 times) that oxygen starvation results. Oxygen starvation of the brain reduces a person's ability to reason and make decisions. Exposure to even very small amounts of CO over a period of several hours will reduce a pilot's ability to operate an airplane safely. Susceptibility to CO poisoning increases with altitude. As altitude increases, air pressure decreases and the body has difficulty getting enough oxygen. Add CO, which further deprives the body of oxygen, and the situation can become critical. Many light aircraft cabins are warmed by air that has been circulated around engine exhaust pipes. A defect in the exhaust pipes or cabin heating system may allow CO to enter the cockpit or cabin. This danger is the greatest during the winter months and any time the temperature is such that use of the cabin heating system becomes necessary. But CO may enter the cabin through openings in the firewall and around fairings in the area of the exhaust system. Early symptoms of CO poisoning are feelings of sluggishness, being too warm, and tightness across the forehead. The early symptoms may be followed by more intense feelings such as headache, throbbing or pressure in the temples, and ringing in the ears. This, in turn, may be followed by severe headache, general weakness, dizziness and gradual dimming of vision. Large accumulations will result in loss of muscular power, vomiting, convulsions and coma. If you smell exhaust odors or begin to feel any of the symptoms previously mentioned, you should immediately assume CO is present and should take the following precautions:

(1) Immediately shut off the cabin air heater and close any other openings that might convey the engine compartment air into the cabin. (2) Open a fresh air source immediately. (3) Inhale oxygen if available. (4) Land at the first opportunity and ensure that any effects from CO are gone before further flight. (5) Have the aircraft inspected to determine that CO is not being allowed to enter the cabin because of a defective exhaust, heat exchanger, unsealed opening between the engine compartment and cabin, or any other factor. For further details on this form of aircraft contamination see (FAA) AC 20-32B.

Fly Safe!

By Captain Ken Stone IL-049